Amendments to the Claims

Claim 1 (currently amended): A video-on-demand (VOD) system, comprising:

a transmission channel;

a plurality of receivers coupled to the transmission channel, a VOD client at each receiver capable of subscribing to one or more VOD sessions over a transport stream; and

a headend coupled to the transmission channel, said headend including a video server than can transmit one or more VOD sessions to one or more receivers, and a control server coupled to the video server, the control server to dynamically allocate and terminate VOD sessions over the transport stream as VOD clients are added and terminated, and~~, if necessary,~~ to cause the video server to transmit one or more dummy sessions over the transport stream to maintain the predetermined minimum bandwidth of content over the transport stream.

Claim 2 (original): The VOD system of claim 1, wherein the control server to prevent each receiver from decoding the dummy sessions.

Claim 3 (original): The VOD system of claim 1, wherein the control server, if necessary, to transmit one or more dummy sessions over the transport stream to maintain a minimum bandwidth of content over the transport stream to ensure that each receiver can synchronize to a subscribed VOD session.

Claim 4 (original): The VOD system of claim 1, wherein the control server to determine whether the bandwidth of content over the transport stream is below a predetermined threshold, and to cause the video server to transmit one or more dummy sessions, as necessary, to maintain the bandwidth of content at or above the predetermined threshold.

Claim 5 (original): The VOD system of claim 1 wherein each receiver includes a demodulator, decoder, and an MPEG frame synchronizer.

Claim 6 (original): The VOD system of claim 1 wherein said headend includes a transmitter having an MPEG frame synchronizer, encoder, and modulator.

Claim 7 (original): The VOD system of claim 1 wherein the transport stream is transmitted over a radio frequency channel.

Claim 8 (original): The VOD system of claim 1 wherein the video server can transmit one or more VOD sessions over one or more radio frequency (RF) channels each associated with a transport stream, and wherein said control server, if necessary, to cause the video server to transmit one or more dummy sessions over each transport stream, as necessary, to maintain a predetermined minimum bandwidth of content over each of the one or more transport streams.

Claim 9 (original): The VOD system of claim 1 wherein when the control server receives a request for a new VOD session from a VOD client, the control server terminates one or more of the one or more dummy sessions, and causes transmission of the new VOD session over the transport stream.

Claim 10 (original): A video-on-demand (VOD) server, comprising: a server that receives requests from one or more VOD clients for one or more VOD sessions, causes transmission of one or more VOD sessions over a transport stream to the one or more VOD clients, determines whether the number of VOD sessions transmitted over the transport stream is below a minimum threshold, and causes transmission of one or more padding sessions over the transport stream if the number of VOD sessions transmitted over the transport stream is below the minimum threshold to maintain the number of VOD sessions at or above the minimum threshold.

Claim 11 (original): The VOD server of claim 10 wherein the server causes transmission of VOD sessions over a plurality of radio frequency channels each associated with a transport stream, the server determines, for each transport stream, whether the number of VOD

sessions is below the minimum threshold, and, for each transport stream, causes transmission of one or more padding sessions if the number of VOD sessions transmitted over the respective transport stream is below the minimum threshold to maintain the number of VOD sessions at or above the minimum threshold.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The VOD server of claim 10 wherein when the server receives a request for a new VOD session from a VOD client, the ~~control server~~ server terminates one or more of the one or more padding sessions, and causes transmission of the new VOD session.

Claims 13-19 (cancelled)

Claim 20 (original): A digital video system, comprising:

a transmission channel;

a plurality of receivers coupled to the transmission channel, a client at each receiver capable of subscribing to one or more video sessions over a transport stream; and

a headend coupled to the transmission channel, said headend including a video server than can transmit one or more video sessions to one or more receivers, and a control server coupled to the video server, the control server to cause the video server to transmit one or more dummy sessions over the transport stream to maintain a predetermined minimum bandwidth of content over the transport stream.

Claim 21 (original): The digital video system of claim 20, wherein the control server to determine whether the bandwidth of content over the transport stream is below a predetermined threshold, and to cause the video server to transmit one or more dummy sessions, as necessary, to maintain the bandwidth of content at or above the predetermined threshold.

Claim 22 (original): The digital video system of claim 20, wherein the headend transmits digital video programming in accordance to one of a digital broadcast satellite (DBS)

system, digital cable system, high definition television (HDTV) system, and video-on-demand (VOD) system.

Claims 23-25 (cancelled)